



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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ALCOA FALL LEAF COLLECTION UPDATE

The City of Alcoa reported today its fall leaf collection has been hampered by damage to leaf collection equipment mostly due to the improper mixing of debris with leaves awaiting collection.

Public Work Director Kenny Wiggins noted, "We got behind last week as two of our three loaders were down due to mechanical problems. One was down after picking up a log that someone had raked in with their leaves. The log broke the fan, requiring repairs. A second loader suffered a similar fate. Someone had raked leaves over the top of a container of large nails. The nails were like shrapnel when they were vacuumed into the machine, causing a significant amount of damage. A large part of the city did not receive leaf service the week of Thanksgiving."

Wiggins went on to say, "This reinforces our request for residents to separate their leaves from other trash. We still have a problem with residents not abiding by that request or the requirement that leaves not be raked into the street unless there is a steep bank that keeps them from being placed. If it is obvious that a pile is mixed with other trash, the crews will leave it."

With all three loaders back on the road, the crews have been working overtime this week to get caught up. Unfortunately, misfortune struck again Tuesday night. One of the loaders threw an engine rod, knocking a hole in the side of the block leaving the crews with only two loaders.

To aid in the collection effort, Wiggins offers the following reminders to citizens regarding leaf pickup:

PROPER PREPARATION

- Rake leaves into a pile(s) or windrow parallel to the street at the curb or edge of pavement (but not onto the street) and off any sidewalk. Windrows are preferable. The vacuum trucks collecting the leaves are customized to vacuum from the roadway enabling crews to move more quickly and collect leaves more efficiently.

- Avoid raking other materials into leaf piles (brush, trash, stones, etc.), as these could damage equipment or cause injury to personnel. Damaged leaf collection equipment also delays leaf collection.

REMEMBER!

- Unless delayed by severe weather or mechanical failures, leaf collection occurs a minimum of once a week in each neighborhood.
- Leaves should be kept in a separate pile from the brush. Brush and leaf collection equipment is different.
- Leaf piles containing foreign debris will not be collected.
- Avoid placing leaves where they would obstruct any fire hydrant.
- Residents are requested not to rake leaves onto the pavement, sidewalks and catch basin grates. Leaves block catch basin grates and storm drains creating an unsafe driving surface and a danger from flooding.
- The City provides leaf collection only in the fall and spring. Leaves raked at other times of the year must be bagged and set out with refuse.
- Leaf piles with vehicles parked in front of them will not be picked up.
- Maintenance crews will not enter private property.
- Leaf piles should not be placed off your property.

Contrary to popular belief, leaf piles do not kill grass, although they may cause it to discolor. The grass will grow back, rich and green, in the spring. Citizens should not be afraid of placing their leaves in their yards to await pickup rather than in the street.

City Manager Mark Johnson wishes to thank the citizens for their patience and cooperation with this season's leaf collection while reminding them of the dangers associated with placing leaves and other debris into the street. "Not only does this practice create unsafe conditions for residents but it is a violation of the Alcoa City Municipal Code punishable by a minimum fine and costs of \$65.00 for each offense," Johnson said.

Any citizen with questions regarding the leaf collection service may call the City of Alcoa Public Works Department at 380-4800.

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